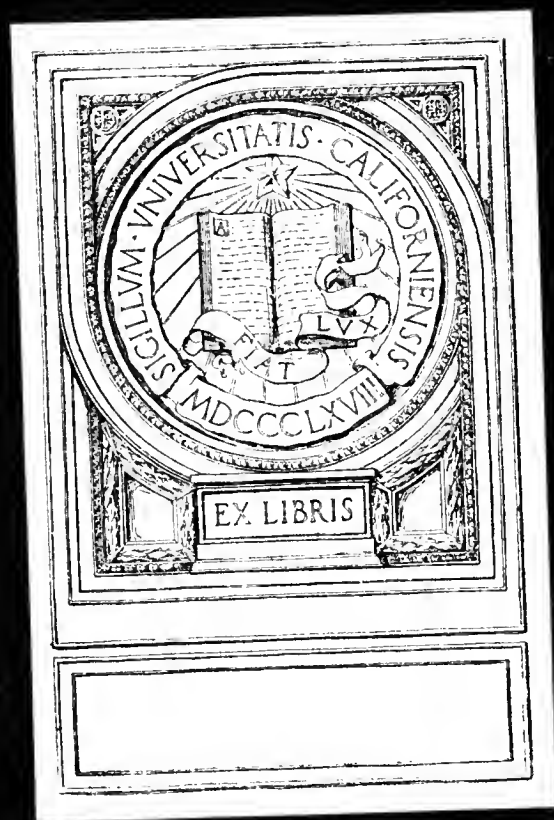


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Labor War Aims

*Full text of the agreement
on war aims just adopted
by the Inter-Allied
Labor and Socialist
Conference in
London*



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F O R E W O R D

THE following statement of war aims or peace conditions which was formulated by the Inter-Allied Labor Conference in London is reprinted from the *London Times* of February 25th last. It differs from similar statements which have preceded it in one important respect. All the factions in the pro-war labor and socialist parties in the Western European democracies endorse it. They had been unable to reach any such complete agreement at their previous conferences and their new unanimity has given to their programme a vastly increased weight. When the Stockholm Conference was proposed last summer the socialist and labor parties were embarrassed by internal divisions. Now they are united, and if they are joined, as they hope to be, by the American labor organizations, they should be powerful enough to secure from their governments consent to the gathering of the proposed inter-belligerent conference. Just as the labor and socialist parties of the western Allies have succeeded, where their governments have failed, in reaching a common statement of war aims, so the labor and socialist parties of the whole world may reach a similar agreement in spite of the chasm which still divides the belligerent governments. If they can, its effect is certain to be important and may be decisive. As Mr. Arthur Henderson has recently declared: "Peace will come when the working class movement has discovered by interchange of views the conditions of an honorable and democratic peace, worthy of the unimaginable sacrifices the people have made, and has pressed these terms upon the several governments with the resolute declaration that peace must be made on these terms and no other."

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Inter-Allied Labor War Aims

THE following is the full text of the "Memorandum on War Aims" adopted by the Inter-Allied Labor and Socialist Conference in London:

The War

I.—The Inter-Allied Conference declares that whatever may have been the causes of the outbreak of war it is clear that the peoples of Europe, who are necessarily the chief sufferers from its horrors, had themselves no hand in it. Their common interest is now so to conduct the terrible struggle in which they find themselves engaged as to bring it, as soon as may be possible, to an issue in a secure and lasting peace for the world.

The Conference sees no reason to depart from the following declaration unanimously agreed to at the Conference of the Socialist and Labor Parties of the Allied Nations on February 14, 1915:

"This Conference cannot ignore the profound general causes of the European conflict, itself a monstrous product of the antagonisms which tear asunder capitalist society and of the policy of colonial dependencies and aggressive imperialism, against which International Socialism has never ceased to fight, and in which every government has its share of responsibility.

"The invasion of Belgium and France by the German armies threatens the very existence of independent nationalities and strikes a blow at all faith in treaties. In these circumstances a victory for German imperialism would be the defeat and the destruction of democracy and liberty in Europe. The Socialists of Great Britain, Belgium, France and Russia do not pursue the political and economic crushing of Germany; they are not at war with the peoples of Germany and Austria, but only with the governments of those countries by which they are oppressed. They demand that Belgium shall be liberated and compensated. They desire that the question of Poland shall be settled in accordance with the wishes of the Polish people, either in the sense of autonomy in the midst of another state, or in that of complete independence. They wish that throughout all Europe, from Alsace-Lorraine to the Balkans, those populations that have been annexed by force shall receive the right freely to dispose of themselves.

"While inflexibly resolved to fight until victory is achieved to accomplish this task of liberation, the Socialists are none the less resolved to resist any attempt to transform this defensive war into a war of conquest, which would only prepare fresh con-

licts, create new grievances and subject various peoples more than ever to the double plague of armaments and war.

"Satisfied that they are remaining true to the principles of the International, the members of the Conference express the hope that the working classes of all the different countries will before long find themselves united again in their struggle against militarism and capitalist imperialism. The victory of the Allied Powers must be a victory for popular liberty, for unity, independence and autonomy of the nations in the peaceful federation of the United States of Europe and the world."

Making the World Safe for Democracy

II.—Whatever may have been the objects for which the war was begun the fundamental purpose of the Inter-Allied Conference in supporting the continuance of the struggle is that the world may henceforth be made safe for democracy.

Of all the conditions of peace none is so important to the peoples of the world as that there should be henceforth on earth no more war.

Whoever triumphs, the peoples will have lost unless an international system is established which will prevent war. What would it mean to declare the right of peoples to self-determination if this right were left at the mercy of new violations, and was not protected by a super-national authority? That authority can be no other than the League of Nations, in which not only all the present belligerents, but every other independent state, should be pressed to join.

The constitution of such a League of Nations implies the immediate establishment of an International High Court, not only for the settlement of all disputes between states that are of justiciable nature, but also for prompt and effective mediation between states in other issues that vitally interest the power or honor of such states. It is also under the control of the League of Nations that the consultation of peoples for purposes of self-determination must be organized. This popular right can be vindicated only by popular vote. The League of Nations shall establish the procedure of international jurisdiction, fix the methods which will maintain the freedom and security of the election, restore the political rights of individuals which violence and conquest may have injured, repress any attempt to use pressure or corruption, and prevent any subsequent reprisals. It will be also necessary to form an International Legislature, in which the representatives of every civilized state would have their al-

lotted share and energetically to push forward, step by step, the development of international legislation agreed to by, and definitely binding upon, the several states.

By a solemn agreement all the states and peoples consulted shall pledge themselves to submit every issue between two or more of them for settlement as aforesaid. Refusal to accept arbitration or to submit to the settlement will imply deliberate aggression, and all the nations will necessarily have to make common cause, by using any and every means at their disposal, either economical or military, against any state or states refusing to submit to the arbitration award, or attempting to break the world's covenant of peace.

But the sincere acceptance of the rules and decisions of the super-national authority implies complete democratization in all countries; the removal of all the arbitrary powers who, until now, have assumed the right of choosing between peace and war; the maintenance or creation of legislatures elected by and on behalf of the sovereign right of the people; the suppression of secret diplomacy, to be replaced by the conduct of foreign policy under the control of popular legislatures, and the publication of all treaties, which must never be in contravention of the stipulation of the League of Nations, with the absolute responsibility of the government, and more particularly of the foreign minister of each country to its legislature.

Only such a policy will enforce the frank abandonment of every form of imperialism. When based on universal democracy, in a world in which effective international guarantees against aggression have been secured, the League of Nations will achieve the complete suppression of force as the means of settling international differences.

The League of Nations, in order to prepare for the concerted abolition of compulsory military service in all countries, must first take steps for the prohibition of fresh armaments on land and sea and for the common limitation of the existing armaments by which all the peoples are burdened; as well as the control of war manufactures and the enforcement of such agreements as may be agreed to thereupon. The states must undertake such manufactures themselves, so as entirely to abolish profit-making armament firms, whose pecuniary interest lies always in the war scares and progressive competition in the preparation for war.

The nations, being armed solely for self-defense and for such action as the League of Nations may ask them to take in defense of international right, will be left free, under international control either to create a voluntarily recruited force or to organize the nation for defense without professional armies for long terms of military service.

To give effect to the above principles, the Inter-Allied Conference declares that the rules upon which the League of Nations will be founded must be included in the treaty of peace, and will henceforth become the basis of the settlement of differences. In that spirit the Conference expresses its agreement with the propositions put forward by President Wilson in his last message:

(1) That each part of the final settlement must be based upon the essential justice of that particular case, and upon such adjustments as are most likely to bring a peace that will be permanent.

(2) That peoples and provinces are not to be bartered about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were mere chattels and pawns in a game, even the great game now forever discredited of the balance of power; but that

(3) Every territorial settlement involved in this war must be made in the interest and for the benefit of the populations concerned, and not as a part of any mere adjustments of compromise of claims amongst rival states.

(4) That all well-defined national aspirations shall be accorded the utmost satisfaction that can be accorded them without introducing new or perpetuating old elements of discord and antagonism that would be likely in time to break the peace of Europe, and, consequently, of the world.

Territorial Questions

III.—The Inter-Allied Conference considers that the proclamation of principles of international law accepted by all nations, and the substitution of a regular procedure for the forceful acts by which states calling themselves sovereign have hitherto adjusted their differences—in short, the establishment of a League of Nations—gives an entirely new aspect to territorial problems.

The old diplomacy and the yearnings after domination by states, or even by peoples, which during the whole of the nineteenth century have taken advantage of and corrupted the aspirations of nationalities, have brought Europe to a condition of anarchy and disorder which have led inevitably to the present catastrophe.

The Conference declares it to be the duty of the Labor and Socialist movement to suppress without hesitation the imperialist designs in the various states which have led one government after another to seek, by the triumph of military force, to acquire either new territories or economic advantage.

The establishment of a system of international law and the guarantees afforded by a League of Nations, ought to remove the last excuse for those strategic protections which nations have hitherto felt bound to require.

It is the supreme principle of the right of each

people to determine its own destiny that must now decide what steps should be taken by way of restitution or reparation, and whatever territorial readjustments may be found to be necessary at the close of the present war.

The Conference accordingly emphasizes the importance to the labor and Socialist movement of a clear and exact definition of what is meant by the right of each people to determine its own destiny. Neither destiny of race nor identity of language can be regarded as affording more than a presumption in favor of federation or unification. During the nineteenth century the theories of this kind have so often served as a cloak for aggression that the International cannot but seek to prevent any recurrence of such an evil. Any adjustments of boundaries that become necessary must be based exclusively upon the desire of the people concerned.

It is true that it is impossible for the necessary consultation of the desires of the people concerned to be made in any fixed and invariable way for all the cases in which it is required, and that the problems of nationality and territory are not the same for the inhabitants of all countries. Nevertheless, what is necessary in all cases is that the procedure to be adopted should be decided, not by one of the parties to the dispute, but by the super-national authority.

Upon the basis of the general principles herein formulated the Conference proposes the following solutions of particular problems:

(a) Belgium

The Conference emphatically insists that a foremost condition of peace must be the reparation by the German government, under the direction of an International Commission, of the wrong admittedly done to Belgium; payment by that government for all the damage that has resulted from this wrong; and the restoration of Belgium as an independent sovereign state, leaving to the decision of the Belgian people the determination of their own future policy in all respects.

(b) Alsace and Lorraine

The Conference declares that the problem of Alsace and Lorraine is not one of territorial adjustment, but one of right, and thus an international problem, the solution of which is indispensable if peace is to be either just or lasting.

The Treaty of Frankfort at one and the same time mutilated France and violated the right of the inhabitants of Alsace and Lorraine to dispose of their own destinies, a right which they have repeatedly claimed.

The new treaty of peace, in recognizing that Germany, by her declaration of war of 1914, has herself broken the Treaty of Frankfort, will make null and void the gains of a brutal conquest and of the violence committed against the people.

France, having secured this recognition, can properly agree to a fresh consultation of the population of Alsace and Lorraine as to its own desires.

The treaty of peace will bear the signatures of every

nation in the world. It will be guaranteed by the League of Nations. To this League of Nations France is prepared to remit, with the freedom and sincerity of a popular vote, of which the details can be subsequently settled, the organization of such a consultation as shall settle forever, as a matter of right, the future destiny of Alsace and Lorraine, and as shall finally remove from the common life of all Europe a quarrel which has imposed so heavy a burden upon it.

(c) The Balkans

The Conference lays down the principle that all the violations and perversions of the rights of the people which have taken place, or are still taking place, in the Balkans must be made the subject of redress or reparation.

Serbia, Montenegro, Rumania, Albania and all the territories occupied by military forces should be evacuated by the hostile forces. Wherever any population of the same race and tongue demands to be united this must be done. Each such people must be accorded full liberty to settle its own destiny, without regard to the imperialistic pretensions of Austria, Hungary, Turkey or other state.

Accepting this principle, the Conference proposes that the whole problem of the administrative reorganization of the Balkan peoples should be dealt with by a special conference of their representatives or in case of disagreement by an authoritative international commission on the basis of (a) the concession within each independent sovereignty of local autonomy and security for the development of its particular civilization of every racial minority; (b) the universal guarantee of freedom of religion and political equality for all races; (c) a Customs and Postal Union embracing the whole of the Balkan states with free access for each to its natural seaport; (d) the entry of all the Balkan states into a federation for the concerted arrangement by mutual agreement among themselves of all matters of common interest.

(d) Italy

The conference declares its warmest sympathy with the people of Italian blood and speech who have been left outside the boundaries that have, as a result of the diplomatic agreements of the past, and for strategic reasons, been assigned to the Kingdom of Italy, and supports their claim to be united with those of their own race and tongue. It realizes that arrangements may be necessary for securing the legitimate interests of the people of Italy in the adjacent seas, but it condemns the aims of conquest of Italian Imperialism and believes that all legitimate needs can be safeguarded, without precluding a like recognition of the deeds of others or annexation of other people's territories.

Regarding the Italian population dispersed on the eastern shores of the Adriatic, the relations between Italy and the Yugo-Slav populations must be based on principles of equity and conciliation, so as to prevent any cause of future quarrel.

If there are found to be groups of Slavonian race within the newly defined Kingdom of Italy or groups of Italian race in Slavonian territory, mutual guarantees must be given for the assurance of all of them, on one side or the other, full liberty of local self-government and of the natural development of their several activities.

(e) Poland and the Baltic Provinces

In accordance with the right of every people to determine its own destinies, Poland must be reconstituted in unity and independence with free access to the sea.

The Conference declares further, that any annexation by Germany, whether open or disguised, of Livonia, Courland or Lithuania would be a flagrant and wholly inadmissible violation of international law.

(f) The Jews and Palestine

The Conference demands for the Jews in all countries the same elementary rights of freedom of religion, education, residence and trade and equal citizenship that ought to be extended to all the inhabitants of every nation. It further expresses the opinion that Palestine should be set free from the hard and oppressive government of the Turk, in order that this country may form a Free State, under international guarantee, to which such of the Jewish people as desire to do so may return and may work out their own salvation free from interference by those of alien race or religion.

(g) The Problem of the Turkish Empire

The Conference condemns the handing back to the systematically cruel domination of the Turkish government any subject people. Thus, whatever may be proposed with regard to Armenia, Mesopotamia and Arabia, they cannot be restored to the tyranny of the Sultan and his Pashas. The Conference condemns the imperialist aims of governments and capitalists who would make of these and other territories now dominated by the Turkish hordes merely instruments either of exploitation or militarism. If the peoples of these territories do not feel themselves able to settle their own destinies, the Conference insists that, conformably with the policy of "no annexations," they should be placed for administration in the hands of a Commission acting under the Super-National Authority or League of Nations. It is further suggested that the peace of the world requires that the Dardanelles should be permanently and effectively neutralized and opened like all the main lines of marine communication, under the control of the League of Nations, freely to all nations, without hindrance or customs duties.

(h) Austria-Hungary

The Conference does not propose as a war aim dismemberment of Austria-Hungary or its deprivation of economic access to the sea. On the other hand, the Conference cannot admit that the claims to independence made by the Czecho-Slovaks and the Yugo-Slavs must be regarded merely as questions for internal decision. National independence ought to be accorded, according to rules to be laid down by the League of Nations, to such peoples as demand it, and these communities ought to have the opportunity of determining their own groupings and federations according to their affinities and interests. If they think fit they are free to substitute a free federation of Danubian states for the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

(i) The Colonies and Dependencies

The International has always condemned the colonial policy of capitalist governments. Without ceasing to condemn it, the Inter-Allied Conference nevertheless recognizes the existence of a state of things which it is obliged to take into account.

The Conference considers that the treaty of peace ought to secure to the natives in all colonies and dependencies effective protection against the excesses of capitalist colonialism. The Conference demands the concession of administrative autonomy for all groups of people that attain

a certain degree of civilization, and for all the others a progressive participation in local government.

The Conference is of opinion that the return of the colonies to those who possessed them before the war, or the exchange or compensations which might be effected, ought not to be an obstacle to the making of peace.

Those colonies that have been taken by conquest from any belligerent must be made the subject of special consideration at the Peace Conference, as to which the communities in their neighborhood will be entitled to take part. But the clause in the treaty of peace on this point must secure economic equality in such territories for the peoples of all nations, and thereby guarantee that none are shut out from legitimate access to raw materials; prevented from disposing of their own products, or deprived of their proper share of economic development.

As regards more especially the colonies of all the belligerents in Tropical Africa, from sea to sea, including the whole of the region north of the Zambesi and south of the Sahara, the Conference condemns any imperialist idea which would make these countries the booty of one or several nations, exploit them for the profit of the capitalist or use them for the promotion of the militarist aims of the governments.

With respect to these colonies the Conference declares in favor of a system of control, established by international agreement, under the League of Nations and maintained by its guarantee, which, whilst respecting national sovereignty, would be alike inspired by broad conceptions of economic freedom and concerned to safeguard the rights of the natives under the best conditions possible for them, and in particular:

(1) It would take account in each locality of the wishes of the people, expressed in the form which is possible for them.

(2) The interests of the native tribes as regards the ownership of the soil would be maintained.

(3) The whole of the revenues would be devoted to the well-being and development of the colonies themselves.

Economic Relations

IV. The Inter-Allied Conference declares against all the projects now being prepared by imperialists and capitalists, not in any one country only, but in most countries, for an economic war, after peace has been secured, either against one or other foreign nation or against all foreign nations, as such an economic war, if begun by any country, would inevitably lead to reprisals, to which each nation in turn might in self-defense be driven. The main lines of marine communication should be open without hindrance to vessels of all nations under the protection of the League of Nations. The Conference realizes that all attempts at economic aggression, whether by protective tariffs or capitalist trusts or monopolies, inevitably result in the spoliation of the working classes of the several countries for the profit of the capitalists; and the working class see in the alliance between the military imperialists and the fiscal protectionists in any country whatsoever not only a serious danger to the prosperity of the masses of the people, but also a grave menace

to peace. On the other hand, the right of each nation to the defense of its own economic interests, and in face of the world-shortage hereinafter mentioned, to the conservation for its own people of a sufficiency of its own supplies of foodstuffs and raw materials, cannot be denied. The Conference accordingly urges upon the labor and Socialist parties of all countries the importance of insisting, in the attitude of the government towards commercial enterprise, along with the necessary control of supplies for its own people, on the principle of the open door, and without hostile discrimination against foreign countries. But it urges equally the importance, not merely of conservation, but also of the utmost possible development, by appropriate government action, of the resources of every country for the benefit not only of its own people, but also of the world, and the need for an international agreement for the enforcement in all countries of the legislation on factory conditions, a maximum eight-hour day, the prevention of "sweating" and unhealthy trades necessary to protect the workers against exploitation and oppression, and the prohibition of night work by women and children.

The Problems of Peace

V. To make the world safe for democracy involves much more than the prevention of war, either military or economic. It will be a device of the capitalist interests to pretend that the treaty of peace need concern itself only with the cessation of the struggles of the armed forces and with any necessary territorial readjustments. The Inter-Allied Conference insists that in view of the probable world-wide shortage, after the war, of exportable foodstuffs and raw materials, and of merchant shipping, it is imperative, in order to prevent the most serious hardships, and even possible famine, in one country or another, that systematic arrangements should be made on an international basis for the allocation and conveyance of the available exportable surpluses of these commodities to the different countries, in proportion, not to their purchasing powers, but to their several pressing needs; and that, within each country, the government must for some time maintain its control of the most indispensable commodities, in order to secure their appropriation, not in a competitive market mainly to the richer classes in proportion to their means, but, systematically, to meet the most urgent needs of the whole community on the principle of "no cake for anyone until all have bread."

Moreover, it cannot but be anticipated that, in all countries, the dislocation of industry attendant on peace, the instant discharge of millions of munition makers and workers in war trades, and the demobilization of millions of soldiers—in face of the

scarcity of industrial capital, the shortage of raw materials, and the insecurity of commercial enterprise—will, unless prompt and energetic action be taken by the several governments, plunge a large part of the wage-earning population into all the miseries of unemployment more or less prolonged. In view of the fact that widespread unemployment in any country, like a famine, is an injury not to that country alone, but impoverishes also the rest of the world, the Conference holds that it is the duty of every government to take immediate action, not merely to relieve the unemployed, when unemployment has set in, but actually, so far as may be practicable, to prevent the occurrence of unemployment. It therefore urges upon the labor parties of every country the necessity of their pressing upon their governments the preparation of plans for the execution of all the innumerable public works (such as the making and repairing of roads, railways and waterways, the erection of schools and public buildings, the provision of working-class dwellings and the reclamation and afforestation of land) that will be required in the near future, not for the sake of finding measures of relief for the unemployed, but with a view to these works being undertaken at such a rate in each locality as will suffice, together with the various capitalist enterprises that may be in progress, to maintain at a fairly uniform level year by year, and throughout each year, the aggregate demand for labor; and thus prevent there being any unemployed. It is now known that in this way it is quite possible for any government to prevent, if it chooses, the occurrence of any widespread or prolonged involuntary unemployment; which if it is now in any country allowed to occur, is as much the result of government neglect as is any epidemic disease.

Restoration of the Devastated Areas and Reparation of Wrongdoing

VI. The Inter-Allied Conference holds that one of the most imperative duties of all countries immediately peace is declared will be the restoration, so far as may be possible, of the homes, farms, factories, public buildings and means of communication whatever destroyed by war operations; that the restoration should not be limited to compensation for public buildings, capitalist undertakings and material property proved to be destroyed or damaged, but should be extended to setting up the wage-earners and peasants themselves in homes and employment; and that to insure the full and impartial application of these principles the assessment and distribution of the compensation, so far as the cost is contributed by any international fund, should be made under the direction of an international Commission.

The Conference will not be satisfied unless there is a full and free judicial investigation into the accusations made on all sides that particular governments have ordered, and particular officers have exercised, acts of cruelty, oppression, violence and theft against individual victims, for which no justification can be found in the ordinary usages of war. It draws attention in particular to the loss of life and property of merchant seamen and other non-combatants (including women and children) resulting from this inhuman and ruthless conduct. It should be part of the conditions of peace that there should be forthwith set up a Court of Claims and Accusations, which should investigate all such allegations as may be brought before it, summon the accused person or government to answer the complaint, to pronounce judgment, and award compensation or damages, payable by the individual or government condemned, to the persons who had suffered wrong, or to their dependents. The several governments must be responsible, financially and otherwise, for the presentation of the cases of their respective nationals to such a Court of Claims and Accusations, and for the payment of the compensation awarded.

International Conference

VII. The Inter-Allied Conference is of opinion that an International Conference of Labor and Socialist organizations, held under proper conditions, would at this stage render useful service to world democracy by assisting to remove misunderstandings, as well as the obstacles which stand in the way of world peace.

Awaiting the resumption of the normal activities of the International Socialist Bureau, we consider that an International Conference, held during the period of hostilities, should be organized by a committee whose impartiality cannot be questioned. It should be held in a neutral country, under such conditions as would inspire confidence; and the Conference should be fully representative of all the labor and Socialist movement in all the belligerent countries accepting the conditions under which the Conference is convoked.

As an essential condition to an International Conference the Commission is of opinion that the organizers of the Conference should satisfy themselves that all the organizations to be represented put in precise form, by a public declaration, their peace terms in conformity with the principles "no annexations or punitive indemnities, and the right of all peoples to self-determination," and that they are working with all their power to obtain from

their governments the necessary guarantees to apply those principles honestly and unreservedly to all questions to be dealt with at any official peace conference.

In view of the vital differences between the Allied countries and the Central Powers, the Commission is of opinion that it is highly advisable that the Conference should be used to provide an opportunity for the delegates from the respective countries now in a state of war to make a full and frank statement of their present position and future intentions, and to endeavor by mutual agreement to arrange a programme of action for a speedy and democratic peace.

The Conference is of opinion that the working classes, having made such sacrifices during the war, are entitled to take part in securing a democratic world peace, and that M. Albert Thomas (France), M. Emile Vandervelde (Belgium) and Mr. Arthur Henderson (Great Britain) be appointed as a commission to secure from all the governments a promise that at least one representative of Labor and Socialism will be included in the official representation at any government conference, and to organize a Labor and Socialist representation to sit concurrently with the official conference; further, that no country be entitled to more than four representatives at such conference.

The Conference regrets the absence of representatives of American labor and Socialism from the Inter-Allied Conference, and urges the importance of securing their approval of the decisions reached. With this object in view, the Conference agrees that a deputation, consisting of one representative from France, Belgium, Italy and Great Britain, together with Camille Huysmans (Secretary of the International Socialist Bureau), proceed to the United States at once, in order to confer with representatives of the American democracy on the whole situation of the war.

The Conference resolves to transmit to the Socialists of the Central Empires and of the nations allied with them the memorandum in which the Conference has defined the conditions of peace, conformably with the principles of Socialist and international justice. The Conference is convinced that these conditions will commend themselves on reflection to the mind of every Socialist, and the Conference asks for the answer of the Socialists of the Central Empires, in the hope that these will join without delay in a joint effort of the International, which has now become more than ever the best and the most certain instrument of democracy and peace.

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